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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Observance of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty and Proclamation of the First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty

Programme budget implications of draft resolution B contained in document A/C.2/50/L.39

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 1, 3, 5 and 6 of draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.39, section B, the General Assembly would:

(a) Proclaim the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (para. 1);

(b) Request the Secretary-General to establish within the Secretariat a clearly identifiable entity with the resources and number of qualified and competent Professional and support staff that are required to undertake a broad range of functions in support of the system-wide implementation of the eradication of poverty, including activities for the Decade, relying on the most efficient and cost-effective use of resources (para. 3);

(c) Decide to establish an ad hoc open-ended working committee of the General Assembly to elaborate an operational and comprehensive international framework of action for the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, to begin its work as early as possible in 1996 (para. 5);

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(d) Also decide, for that purpose, to convene in New York two sessions of the ad hoc open-ended working committee, each for the duration of one week, so that it might complete its work no later than September 1996 in order to submit the draft international framework for action for adoption by the Assembly at its fifty-first session (para. 6).

I. DESCRIPTION OF ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES RESULTING FROM THE DRAFT RESOLUTION

2. The activities proposed in the draft resolution would fall under programme 25 (Global social issues and policies) of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised. The activities relating to the observance of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty in 1996 and related resources have also been programmed under subprogramme 4 (Strategies for poverty eradication) of programme A (Global social issues and policies) of section 7A (Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. 1/ The activities proposed in the draft resolution in connection with the First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) represent a new element for which no resources have been envisaged in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

3. In his reports on the draft programme for the observance of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty (1996) 2/ and international cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries, 3/ the Secretary-General has proposed the programme of activities of the Secretariat and the organizations of the United Nations system in the context of the agenda item under consideration. Further responsibilities of the Secretariat are expected to arise from the operational and comprehensive international framework of action for the First Decade for the Eradication of Poverty to be elaborated by the ad hoc open-ended working committee of the General Assembly, as envisaged in operative paragraph 5 of section B of the draft resolution.

4. The eradication of poverty, as a commitment made by the World Summit for Social Development and in relation to the activities to be undertaken during the Year and the Decade, would involve several departments of the Secretariat and most organizations of the United Nations system. Within the Secretariat, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the regional commissions, as well as the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), will contribute to those activities within the context of their mandates. At the level of the system, task forces put in place by the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the follow-up of major United Nations conferences will ensure effective coordination of activities in support of national efforts.

5. With regard to operative paragraph 3 of section B of the draft resolution, the entity within the Secretariat that would undertake the "broad range of functions in support of the system-wide implementation of the eradication of poverty, including activities for the Decade" would be the Division for Social

Policy and Development of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. The Division would act as the focal point for the activities pertaining to the observance of the Year and the Decade. A request for additional resources for carrying out activities in relation to the eradication of poverty, amounting to 24 work-months of general temporary assistance funds at the P-4 level, has been presented by the Secretary-General under section 7A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. 4/ To strengthen the capacity of the Division for the implementation of those activities, there would also be a further reallocation of resources within the Division, supplemented by redeployment within the Department, as appropriate. In addition, it has been estimated that to ensure that the coordinating role of the focal point, including the substantive servicing of the open-ended working committee of the General Assembly and the substantive servicing of the Commission for Social Development in relation to poverty eradication, as well as the system-wide implementation of Decade activities, is performed effectively, a temporary post at the P-5 level for the biennium 1996-1997 would also be required. The post would be required in order to ensure systematic substantive support for the work of the ad hoc open-ended working committee of the General Assembly and subsequent coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the programme of activities in the context of the Decade at its initial stage. The related costs would amount to $130,600. Moreover, $29,600 would be required for staff assessment. It is estimated that the above coordination and monitoring responsibilities beyond 1997 would continue to be implemented within the Division's core resources.

6. With regard to the activities of the ad hoc open-ended working committee of the General Assembly envisaged in operative paragraphs 5 and 6 of section B of the draft resolution, it is understood that the committee would hold its first session from 25 to 29 March 1996 and its second session from 12 to 16 August 1996, in New York. There would be two meetings per day, with interpretation and translation services in all the official languages of the Organization.

7. The conference-servicing requirements for the above meetings are estimated at $256,200 on a full-cost basis. These requirements would be dealt with within the overall provision for the conference-servicing of United Nations meetings and conferences, reserved in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 under section 26E (Conference services). The actual conference-servicing costs of the meetings would be reported to the General Assembly in the context of the budget performance report for the biennium 1996-1997.

II. PROPOSALS FOR ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

8. The following additional activities will be added:

Section 7A. Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development

3. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Programme A. Global social issues and policies

Subprogramme 4. Strategies for poverty eradication

4. Coordination, harmonization and liaison

Contribution to the activities of the relevant task forces established by the Administrative Committee on Coordination for the follow-up of major conferences on issues relating to the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty and the First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006).

9. The resource requirements estimated in paragraph 5 above ($130,600) would represent additional requirements not provided for in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. In addition, $29,600 would be required for staff assessment, to be offset by an equal amount of income under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).

10. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the proposed programme budget. Further, each statement of programme budget implications and each proposal for revised estimates should contain alternatives to the financing from the contingency fund of the proposed new activities.

11. With regard to the additional requirements of $130,600, it was not possible to identify at this stage activities within programmes on "Social development" which could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium to finance the costs of the activities under the draft resolution. In the event that resources from the contingency fund would not be available to finance the additional activities proposed in paragraph 8 above, the Secretary-General would make alternative proposals to the General Assembly in accordance with the procedure established in resolution 42/211.

III. SUMMARY

12. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.23, the additional activities listed in paragraph 8 above would be programmed under section 7A (Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

13. Subject to the guidelines for the use and operation of the contingency fund, an additional appropriation in the amount of $130,600 would be required under section 7A (Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. In addition, an appropriation in the amount of $29,600 would be required under section 32 (Staff assessment) to be offset by an equal amount of income under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/50/6/Rev.1).

2/ A/50/551.

3/ A/50/396.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/50/6/Rev.1), para. 7A.79.